

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

Mr. Mark W. Everson  
Commissioner  
Internal Revenue Service  
1111 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20224

July 28, 2006

Dear Commissioner Everson:

We are writing in reference to an article that appeared in *The New York Times* on July 23, 2006 entitled "IRS to Cut Tax Auditors." It is our understanding that the Internal Revenue Service plans on eliminating 157 of the agency's 345 estate and gift tax auditors and 17 support staff personnel. We have serious concerns about this significant shift in tax collection policy and request that you immediately delay this decision until Congress has adequate time to review your plan.

According to *The New York Times* article, IRS Deputy Commissioner Kevin Brown has said that the people you plan to lay off are the most productive auditing personnel at the IRS, collecting \$2,200 in taxes for each hour of work. In addition, the IRS has repeatedly told Congress that the problem of the wealthiest Americans failing to pay the true amount of taxes owed is a growing problem. Therefore, we cannot understand why you would want to eliminate auditors from a division that is not only the most productive, but also, according to your agency, where there is a growing need for audits. We would appreciate clarification about the exact workload of these auditors, the distribution of cases by the amount of taxable estate value, and how their possible elimination will affect tax collection for this division of the IRS.

Mr. Brown is also quoted by *The New York Times* saying that increasing the number of audits on gift and estate tax returns would not result in increased tax revenue since "the next case is not a lucrative case." We would also appreciate clarification on this assessment. In the past, the IRS has stated that there is a significant amount of cheating on tax returns with relation to the amount of tax that is supposed to be paid on gifts and that more auditors are needed to review these cases. Regardless of what policy changes to the estate tax may result from Congressional action, the gift tax will still remain intact. With fewer auditors, how will you keep up with audits of those who are not adequately paying taxes on gifts?

Lastly, Mr. Brown apparently told *The New York Times* that the IRS planned on using the money it saves by eliminating the 157 jobs in the estate and gift tax division to increase the number of revenue agents to audit income tax returns. We respectfully request a full description of this plan including the number of employees you expect to hire, the types of cases on which they will work, and the amount of revenue you expect these agents to collect.

Thank you for your kind and prompt attention to this matter and our request. We look forward to your immediate response and once again ask you to delay the implementation of this plan until you provide us with the information we have requested and have given us the proper time to review it.

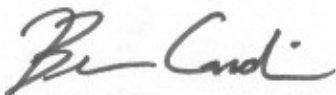
Sincerely,



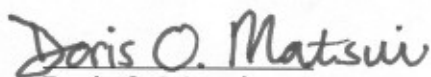
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Sherrod Brown  
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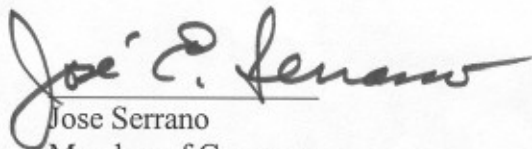
Benjamin L. Cardin  
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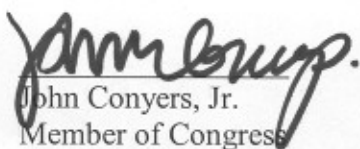
Doris O. Matsui  
Member of Congress



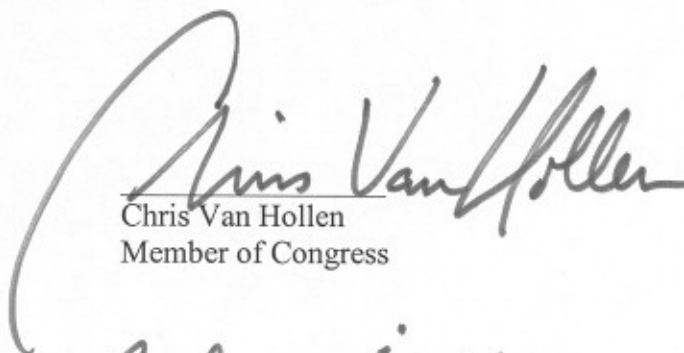
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Jose Serrano  
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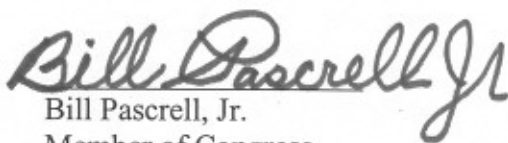
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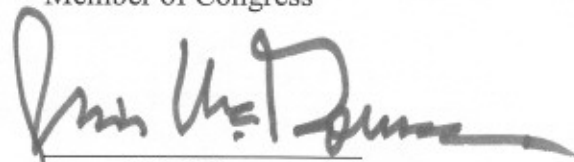
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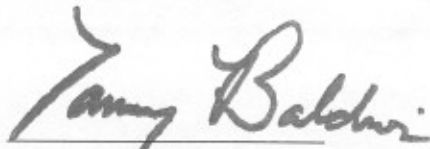
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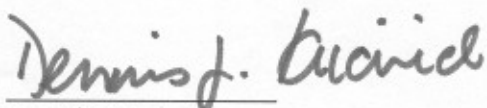
Tammy Baldwin  
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Tom Lantos  
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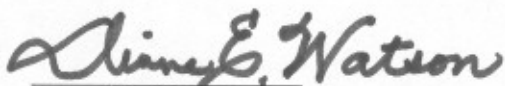
Thomas H. Allen  
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Dennis Kucinich  
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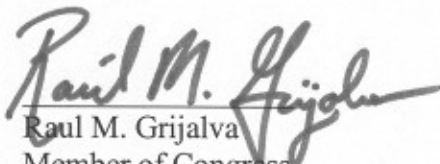
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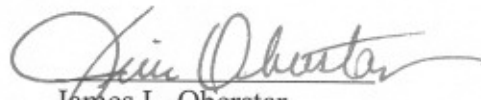
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